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APPEAL OF PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH ON THE OCCASION OF JULY 20, 1969:

We Are Determined to Carry On the Resistance War till Complete Withdrawal of U.S. Troops and till Total Collapse of the Puppet Army and Administration

Dear fighters and compatriots throughout the country!

Fifteen years ago, after the glorious victory of Dien Bien Phu, the Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam recognized our people's fundamental rights — independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. These agreements provided for the holding of free general elections in July 1956 to reunify the whole of Viet Nam.

But the U.S. imperialists have impudently sabotaged the Geneva Agreements, carried out aggression against our country, and unleashed the most atrocious colonial war in human history.

Throughout the past fifteen years, our armed forces and people in the whole country, united as one man, braving all sacrifices and hardships, have fought with sublime heroism against U.S. aggression to save the country. The U.S. imperialists' aggressive plans have gone bankrupt one after another, the U.S. defeats have become heavier and heavier; our people have gone from success to success, and are sure to win total victory.

The armed forces and people in the North have defeated the U.S. aggressors' war of destruction.

The armed forces and people in the South are defeating the U.S. "local war".

Since the spring of the year Mau Than, the situation has radically changed in our favour, to the disadvantage of the enemy. Four-fifths of South Viet Nam's territory with three-quarters of its population have been liberated. In these conditions of victory, the South Viet Nam Congress of People's Representatives met and unanimously elected the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the Advisory Council. This Government has been promptly recognized by over twenty fraternal and friendly countries, and warmly hailed by the people of the world.

Betraying the American people's interests, President Nixon has continued to step up the war of aggression in the southern part of our country, intensified attacks by B.52's and toxic chemicals, launched frenzied bombardments to destroy our villages and cities and massacre our compatriots, perpetrating new crimes of utmost barbarity.

Nixon is carrying out a scheme for "de-Americanization" of the war in an attempt to use puppet troops to fight the South Vietnamese people.

At the Paris Conference, the U.S. imperialists have stubbornly put forward extremely absurd demands, and refused to discuss seriously the reasonable and logical 10-point overall solution advocated by the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam.

Nixon plans to withdraw 25,000 U.S. troops in an attempt to appease American and world public opinion. This is a trick.

The Vietnamese people firmly demand the withdrawal of all U.S. and satellite troops, not the withdrawal of only 25,000 or 250,000 or 500,000 men but a total, complete, unconditional withdrawal. Only in this way will it be possible to retrieve the honour of the United States, and to avoid for hundreds of thousands of young Americans a useless death in South Viet Nam, and suffering and mourning for hundreds of thousands of American families.

After the total withdrawal of the U.S. and satellite troops and complete liberation of South Viet Nam from foreign invasion, the Provisional Coalition Government, as provided for in the 10-point overall solution, will organize free and democratic general elections to enable the South Vietnamese people to determine themselves their own political regime, elect a Constituent Assembly, work out a Constitution, and set up the official Coalition Government of South Viet Nam without any foreign country being allowed to interfere. So long as U.S. troops and the puppet administration remain in existence in South Viet Nam, really free and democratic general elections will be absolutely impossible.

The defeat of the U.S. imperialists is already evident, still they have not given up their evil design of clinging to the southern part of our country. Our armed forces and people throughout the country, millions as one man, upholding revolutionary heroism, and fearless of sacrifices and hardships, are determined to carry on and step up the resistance war, with the firm resolve to fight and win, till the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and till the total collapse of the puppet army and administration, in order to liberate the South, defend the North and achieve ultimate peaceful reunification of the country.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Vietnamese armed forces and people, our sincere thanks for the world's great support and assistance. I am confident that the fraternal socialist countries, all the peace- and justice-loving governments and peoples, including the progressive people in the United States, will extend increased support and assistance to the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation till total victory.

Fighters and compatriots in the whole country, march forward resolutely!

The U.S. imperialist aggressors are doomed to defeat!

The Vietnamese people are sure to win total victory!

North Viet Nam

On July 13 and 14 1969, two U.S. pilotless planes were downed over Nghe An and Hai Phong, bringing the total of U.S. aircraft lost since August 5, 1964 to

3,306

South Viet Nam

IN SAIGON AND SAIGON SECTOR:

— **Raid on camp Paloma of U.S. naval officers in Saigon's 5th precinct: 157 enemy soldier casualties.**

— *750 adverse troops and 65 military vehicles put out of action in 4 provinces North, Northwest and Southwest of the city.*

IN HUE AND THUA THIEN PROVINCE;

— Surprise attacks on Hue Radio, Dong Da military training camp and a U.S. 101st Airborne unit in A Bia valley: 450 adverse casualties.

IN BINH THUAN PROVINCE;

— A U.S. unit and 2 companies of the puppet Special Forces lost 300 men in action.

Another Trick to Soothe Public Opinion

(Text of the July 11, 1969 Communique of PRG Delegation at the Paris Conference)

WIRE-pulled by the U.S., Nguyen Van Thieu has just made a so-called proposal on the holding of elections in South Viet Nam. This is but a new deceitful move to soothe the townspeople in South Viet Nam now demanding the replacement of the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration, and the establishment of a peace cabinet prepared to talk in good faith with the RSVN Provisional Revolutionary Government for an end to the U.S. war of aggression in South Viet Nam and the return of peace in Viet Nam.

With this farce, the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration also aims at appeasing the public in the U.S. and the rest of the world who has been increasingly critical of their attempt to retain the U.S. aggressor troops in South Viet Nam and prolong the war to enrich themselves at the cost of their own people's blood.

The Delegation of the RSVN Provisional Revolutionary Government to the Paris Conference on Viet Nam resolutely exposes such a farce and fraud of the U.S. government and the Saigon puppet administration. With half a million U.S. aggressor troops still treading on South Viet Nam's soil and with the dictatorial and corrupt Thieu-Ky-Huong administration still frantically challenging the people's aspiration for peace, independence and neutrality, all election, to be staged by them will be but a manoeuvre to maintain the U.S.-paid administration and impose U.S. neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam.

The practical, reasonable and logical formula to ensure truly democratic and free elections for the South Vietnamese people to fully exercise their right of self-determination has been clearly enunciated by the RSVN Provisional Revolutionary Government: "The Provisional Revolutionary Government is prepared to enter into consultations with the political forces representing the various social strata and political tendencies in South Viet Nam that stand for peace, independence and neutrality, including those persons who, for political reasons, have had to take up residence abroad, with a view to setting up a provisional coalition government on the principle of equality, democracy and mutual respect. The Provisional Government will organize general elections to return a Constituent Assembly, work out a democratic constitution fully reflecting the interests and aspirations of the entire people, and set up a coalition government symbolizing national concord and a broad union of all social sections."

On the same Nguyen Van Thieu's proposal, the spokesman of the DRVN Government Delegation to the Paris Conference has also issued the following statement:

On July 11, 1969 Nguyen Van Thieu read an address putting forth the so-called "six basic principles" on "free elections". U.S. President Nixon immediately came out strongly for it.

Everybody knows that during June and in early July 1969 President Nixon and his aides many times announced that Thieu would make a "new offer". In fact, Thieu's speech on July 11, 1969 was made on orders from the Nixon administration. The "six basic principles" on "elections" put forth by Thieu are aimed at the following perfidious goals:

— To oppose the setting up of a provisional coalition government that would embody the great unity and national concord as pointed out in the ten-point overall solution of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. The proposed establishment of such a government has been warmly welcomed by political circles in South Viet Nam as well as many individuals who have taken up residence abroad for political reasons, and endorsed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam which includes it in its program of action.

— To maintain and "legalize" the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique and the structure of the Saigon puppet administration, including the so-called "constitution" of this puppet administration. On July 12, 1969 Tran Chanh Thanh, Foreign Minister of the Saigon puppet administration, declared that "elections" would take place according to the laws of the Saigon puppet regime, that this administration would be in charge of them, that the puppet army would "ensure order" in the elections... These statements have thrown more light on the design of the puppet administration.

— To force the patriotic forces in South Viet Nam to lay down their arms and submit to the U.S. and puppets and recognize the U.S.-installed structure of the puppet administration.

In an attempt to cover up the traitorous and bellicose nature of his, in his July 11 message, Nguyen Van Thieu claimed that the Saigon puppet administration stood for "peace, independence, freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity" and was itself a "peace government". But the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique cannot hide their odious and bloodthirsty features.

Justice-upholding opinion in the world has clearly seen that the "new proposal" of the US-Thieu clique is no contribution but actually an obstacle to a political solution to the South-Viet Nam problem. It is no contribution to a peaceful settlement of the Viet Nam problem on the basis of respect for the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people in general, and the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people in particular, but a desperate effort to prolong the U.S. aggressive war, and realize neo-colonialism of the U.S. in South Viet Nam.

In a word, so long as more than 500,000 U.S. and satellite troops remain in South Viet Nam, there can be no free elections for the South Vietnamese people. The Thieu-Ky administration installed by the U.S. through the 1966 and 1967 election farce is illegal, and a U.S. stooge. It has no right to organize the elections. That is why, the Vietnamese people endorse the 10-point overall solution of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, demand that the troops of the U.S. and other foreign countries of the U.S. camp withdraw from South Viet Nam without any condition whatsoever, that a provisional coalition government be set up in South Viet Nam which will have the task of enforcing broad democratic freedoms, organizing free and democratic elections throughout South Viet Nam to choose a constituent national assembly, work out the constitution and set up the official coalition government of South Viet Nam reflecting the national concord and broad unity of the people of all strata.

The Vietnamese people resolutely condemn and reject the so-called "six basic principles" on "free elections" put forth by Nguyen Van Thieu on orders from the U.S. aggressors.

The delegation of the Government of the DRVN fully supports the statement issued on July 11, 1969 by the spokesman of the delegation of the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam exposing this crafty and deceitful manoeuvre of the U.S. and its puppets.

Mr. Xuan Thuy: "The United States Has Flouted the Geneva Agreements"

AT the 26th session of the Paris Conference, Minister of State Xuan Thuy, head of the DRVN Government delegation, reviewed the situation in Viet Nam since the signing of the Geneva Agreements and condemned the acts of aggression of the U.S. which, in the course of the last 15 years, has been flouting the Accords. He dismissed U.S. charge of a North Vietnamese "aggression" against South Viet Nam and assertion that it "sent its troops to defend South Viet Nam only in 1965".

Mr. Xuan Thuy recalled the process of U.S. intervention and aggression against Viet Nam, especially from 1954 onwards when the U.S. set up the Ngo Dinh Diem puppet government and an army of mercenaries to repress the patriotic movement of the South Vietnamese people. Before committing *en masse* U.S. troops to an aggression against South Viet Nam in 1965, the American Government had introduced there tens of thousands of tons of weapons, ammunition and war material, as well as tens of thousands of U.S. "military advisers", apart from entire U.S. units.

26th Plenary Session of Paris Conference on Viet Nam (July 17, 1969)

Exposing the contradictions in U.S. arguments, the DRVN representative said: "If the U.S. truly respects the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the 1954 Geneva Agreements, it must withdraw from South Viet Nam all troops of the U.S. and of countries in the U.S. camps, without laying down any condition whatsoever".

He reiterated his government's support to the NFL position regarding free and democratic general elections in South Viet Nam to enforce the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination.

He showed the U.S. rulers' hand in Nguyen Van Thieu's July 11 "6 fundamental principles of free election". As such elections, he said, would be held under U.S. bayonets by a US-controlled administration, they would unfailingly return a U.S puppet regime.

The DRVN chief negotiator concluded: "The Vietnamese people, the American people and the peoples all over the world are commemorating the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Agreements by pressing for U.S. good faith at the Paris Conference, U.S. ending of its aggression in Viet Nam and respect for the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights, already recognized by the Geneva Agreements".

The statement of Mrs Nguyen Thi Binh, head of the Delegation of the South Viet Nam Republic PRG, at the same session, was partly devoted to the July 11 "proposal" of Nguyen Van Thieu. She pointed out that the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique being a U.S. tool for the pursuance of the aggressive war and only an obstacle to a peaceful Viet Nam settlement, its new "6-point proposal" had no other aim than furthering its masters' ends. Nguyen Van Thieu bluntly demanded that the South Vietnamese "renounce violence", that is they should stop fighting against aggression and accept the puppet Saigon regime and its ultra-reactionary Constitution. As Saigon "Foreign Minister" Tran Chang Thanh has declared it openly, only the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration would be entitled to organize the elections and the puppet army would assume the responsibility of keeping order during the electoral period, which means that the "election committee" proposed by Thieu would be only an organ completely at the beck and call of the the Saigon administration. Moreover, a Saigon delegation representative stated on July 12 that the "presence of U.S. troops it not contrary to the freedom of election". Mrs Nguyen Thi Binh remarked that apart from the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique, nobody else would think free elections feasible with the presence of half a million GIs on South Viet Nam soil.

On behalf of her Government, she flatly rejected the US-puppet offer as a transparent stratagem.

NEW U.S. AIRRAIDS ON NORTH OF DMZ AREA

ON July 14, 15 and 16, 1969, American planes fired rockets, dropped bombs on the town of Vinh and the villages of Hung Nhan (Nghe An province) and Huong Lap (north of the D.M.Z.) and sprayed toxic chemicals over the villages of Vinh Giang, Vinh Quang and Vinh Thanh (Vinh Linh area, north of the 17th parallel) causing losses in lives and property to the local population.

The spokesman of the DRVN Foreign Ministry has made public a strong protest against these new war acts of the American imperialists.

Nghe An, a Province with Revolutionary Traditions

A newly repaired road: bomb craters are seen on both sides

I — THE HEROIC ROUTE

LEAVING Hanoi at daybreak, we rolled on a route fringed with paddy fields announcing a good 5th-month harvest. Phu Ly, this martyr locality, showed its ruins over a distance until then laying undisturbed. Finally, at the turn of a road where the surroundings upturned by bombs reminded us of the brutal reality of the war, this steel structure which is the Ham Rong bridge stood out through the whole of its length. The mount opposite bore the inscription "Quyet Thang" (Resolved to Win) in big white letters, undoubtedly visible to Yankee aircraft coming to take risk over the bridge. For a bridge which has escaped destruction, hundreds of others were destroyed and re-destroyed on this tiny stretch of Vietnamese land, edged with an idyllic coastline with its fine sand and its hot sea and laced with rivers.

As we got nearer and nearer to Vinh, bomb craters of different sizes increased. The fields looked like green carpets pock-marked with glaucous rings in which young peasants were fishing or bathing. Sometimes the road sides were chopped up to the point that there were no more ricefields, no more vegetation and not a single house left intact. Only bomb craters succeeded one another infinitely. The smaller culvert had seen the landscape around it turned into an arid soil riddled with gaping holes. A really apocalyptic spectacle lay ahead as our "command-car" moved on briskly on a road, however, repaired many times. In spite of this raving madness for destruction, everywhere, we passed...

We came across many shock youth brigades. Most of them were under 20 and had come to restore the communication lines. They were young boys and young girls whose broad smile and limpid eyes mirrored the contrast between their youthfulness and the very heavy tasks they were assuming. They might be taken for college boys and girls, happy to live and to work.

II — VINH, THE FIGHTING CITY

FINALLY, at 5 p.m. we arrived at Vinh. This city had been completely devastated by American bombings. Not a house, not a pagoda, not a school, not even the tombs in the cimeteries, nothing had been spared. These tragic ruins, without fail, were reminiscent of Warsaw, Minsk, Stalingrad, ... Yet, it was in the part still left standing of an improvised hotel that we spent the night in Vinh under a starlit and rather hot sky. Later on, we had the chance of meeting comrade Nguyen Hoai Phong, mayor of the city, who evoked for us the main events which had stirred his city and his province since the bombing began in 1964.

Nghe An is a province with revolutionary traditions where sprung many big movements against feudalist oppression and foreign aggression. As early as the 8th century, Mai Hac De, a national hero, led a revolt against the Soui oppressors who exacted from the Vietnamese a heavy tribute, particularly in fetches and other products of the province. The Tay Son brothers had established their H.Q. there before they pushed Northward, and one of them, Nguyen Hue, became the Emperor of Viet Nam under the name of Quang Trung. Lastly, in 1930, a peasant revolt erupted under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party against the regime of colonial exploitation, and the first Soviets were set up there. This revolt was later drowned in blood... It is also the birth place of many patriotic poets and scholars, the most famous of whom were Phan Boi Chau and Nguyen Xuan On, etc... and of President Ho Chi Minh.

After 1954, Nghe An province expanded both agriculturally and industrially. An airline linked Vinh to Dong Hoi, to the South, and Hanoi, to the North. This city was one of the richest of the DRVN after Hanoi and Haiphong. The natural resources of the province were also abundant with timbers, coffee and rubber plantations, and fishing facilitated by its 90-km coastline. Here, one can taste the famous "Xa Doai" oranges, in sale throughout the North and even exported.

It was in the midst of a general economic rehabilitation that, on August 5, 1964, Yankee aircraft unleashed their first attack on Vinh. The Americans had expected to catch the population unawares and intimidate them, but they themselves were rather unpleasantly astonished. In fact, people were already awaiting them and all those who did not take a direct part in production in the city had been evacuated. It was at the beginning of 1964 that the CC of the Viet Nam Workers' Party had warned the city authorities that they would be subject to a probable raid. Of course, the population and cadres were rather abashed. Not that they had indulged in illusions about the Americans' intentions, but they were engaged in peaceful construction, and it was difficult to shift overnight the cadres and population's peace-time way of life onto a war footing, economically, politically and psychologically. So, in peace, the provincial committee had prepared the population for a partial evacuation. Houses with up to 5 rooms were altered into shelters. The inhabitants girded up for combat, in every facet of their life.

After the very first raid, the Americans quickly sang small. On August 5, 1964, a Yankee warplane was brought down over Vinh's Ben Thuy port, and later on, 139 others were knocked out of the city's sky, 53 of them by light weapons. Five pilots were captured in the vicinity of Vinh. Curiously enough, Nghe An is the province that grounded the largest number of aircraft of the hundredth ordinal. The prestige of the USAF went up in smoke with the 100th, 200th, 600th, 900th, 1100th, 1500th and 1900th aircraft blasted down in this province which reached the 437-mark in term of downed planes. When the enemy attacked, the whole city opened up with everything, from heavy A-A guns to militia rifles. Once, during a raid, a plane disintegrated in Vinh's sky and claims for its destruction came from many quarters. Finally, after a meticulous investigation, the credit for it went to a cooking oil workshop. Over these 4 infernal years, a part of Vinh citizens remained on the spot, fighting with an extraordinary heroism and organising their life, to quote the Mayor of Vinh, "in a normal way". I have reported only 5 pilots taken prisoner on the soil of Vinh city because many others succeeded in bailing out into the open sea. Then it would be a race between Vietnamese and Americans to retrieve them. So, once an enemy pilot was reported to have jumped out 2 km offshore. Of course, he called in to his rescue many Yankee planes which cruised the area to provide him with a protection umbrella. The local militia did not hesitate to launch a boat and, while the warplanes attacked the boat, they opened up to protect it. At the end of this tragic race, the pilot was finally caught by the militia who had displayed an unusual courage and sang-froid. There was also the case of a 17-year-old girl who, while tending buffaloes, suddenly, saw an AD6 crash in flames leaving behind it 2 parachutes coming down right over the area where she was standing. Without losing a minute, she went into hiding in a bush and observed. One of the parachutists, a major, scampered by. She darted out, clung his neck and hit hard at the radio transmitter he was using to call in the rescue helicopters. The young girl, named Huong, did not loose her hold until the militia nabbed the pirate as well as the lieutenant who landed a little farther.

III — THE FIGHTING CONTINUES AFTER NOVEMBER 1, 1968

SINCE Nov. 1, 1968, when Johnson declared unconditional cessation of the bombing on North Viet

(Continued page 7)

A group of shock youth and the writer (standing at the center)

News in Brief

To help agriculture in the liming of ricefields and building of hydraulic works etc., the Industrial Service of Nghe An province has paid keen attention to the production of lime. In the first half of 1969, the latter equalled that of the whole of last year.

• A 150 kg per hectare increase in the last tobacco crop was recorded in Ninh Binh province. Under the plan for diversification of culture, the Agricultural Service of the province has decided to raise the tobacco acreage from 1.5 times in 1970 to twice in 1972.

• In Son La province, formerly devoid of any industry, a paper mill has just been commissioned, which efficiently helps in the cultural development in that region inhabited mostly by ethnic minorities.

• In the shooting-drill organized in the recent military training period, 83 per cent of people's militiamen and women of A. district, Thai Binh province, obtained "fairly good" and "good" marks. Q.X. and Q.H. villages recorded a 100 per cent marksmanships. Many women got from 27 to 29 marks out of 30.

• In the four years of fighting against the U.S. war of destruction, 2,381,454 women were awarded the "three-merit women" title (to satisfactorily carry out one's task in production, in the fighting and in family life).

Washington Admits U.S. Failure in South Viet Nam

After the battle: U.S. wounded paratroops at A Bia (Hamburger Hill)

AMERICANIZATION WITH A VENGEANCE

WHAT induced L.B. Johnson to send at the beginning of 1965 U.S. combat forces *en masse* into South Viet Nam was the imminent collapse of the Saigon regime, an instrument of U.S. neo-colonialist policy. In face of the bankruptcy of its "special war" strategy, instead of giving up its aggressive schemes for the good of the American and Vietnamese peoples, Washington chose the "escalation" path: the "local war" and the predatory raids on the DRVN. According to the American press, the Pentagonian strategists thought it would be enough to deploy at most six American divisions to attain their goal.

In the first year of the rush to South Viet Nam, the U.S. Expeditionary Corps wellnigh reached the "ceiling" with five complete divisions and two brigades thrown into the battle. It was the First and Third Divisions of Marines, the First Infantry Division (*Big Red One*), the First Air Mobile Cavalry Division, the 25th Infantry Division (*Tropic Lightning*), and 101st and 177th para brigades. But the victory much sought after did not materialize.

In 1966, after the defeat of the first dry-season counter-offensive, the U.S. Expeditionary Corps was reinforced by a sixth division (the Fourth Infantry) two light infantry brigades (the 196th and 199th) and the 11th Armoured Regiment.

After another year of dismal setbacks topped by the fiasco of the second dry-season counter-offensive, the Pentagon hurled into action three more divisions, the 9th Infantry Division, Division *Americal* and the 101st para Division which had had a brigade on the scene since 1965 and would become later on a second air-mobile division.

Thus, in the height of the "Americanization" of the war, the American troop strength in South Viet Nam consisted of nine complete divisions and a number of independent brigades and regiments, or the equivalent to eleven divisions.

Nevertheless, the aim of the Johnson administration to crush the patriotic resistance of the Vietnamese people was nothing short of a utopia. The ruling out by R. Nixon, a well-known "hawk", and by McNamara and Clark Clifford, former chiefs of the Pentagon, of military victory as impossible is but an escapable admission. The "Americanization" of the war has clearly come to grief. That is the major mobile which caught Nixon in a vicious circle: to return to the "special war" by a "de-Americanization" or "Vietnamization", in essence a "puppetization" of the war. Let us review the tribulations of various units of the U.S. Expeditionary Corps in South Viet Nam.

THE "MARINES" FAIL, EXHAUSTED IN THE MOUNTAINS

THE first to land on South Viet Nam shores, these "elite soldiers" of the U.S. armed forces were garrisoned on the territory of the five northernmost provinces of South Viet Nam, between Quang Ngai and the 17th parallel called by the puppets the "First Tactical Area".

The Third Division (of Marines) whose history dates back to the War of Independence in 1775, arrived at Da Nang in March 1965, and settled down on bridgeheads built with the most formidable technical means at the disposal of the U.S. war machine.

After a dozen weeks' "sizing up", this new adversary, the PLAF succeeded in wiping out for the first time on May 25, 1965 a whole company of *leathernecks* at Nui Thanh, near Chu Lai. Then came the humiliating defeat of that division at Van Tuong on August 18 and 19, 1965 in which more than 900 GIs were put out of action in an amphibious operation launched according to a tactics minutely licked into shape since the Pacific war against Japan: massive air and naval support, utilization of the most up-to-date landing means, tricks and diversions of all kinds to secure the maximum of surprise factors, etc. With the fiasco of this operation, "the biggest landing since Okinawa in 1945", the truth corroborated by facts was that the South Viet Nam patriots were quite capable of outwitting these supermotorized Huns. Around the gigantic bridgehead at Da Nang, the noose of people's war tightened inexorably; and the first guerilla "belt" against the Yankees made its appearance in that region.

In the first years of operations in the three provinces southeast of Da Nang that division took 15,000 casualties and lost 360 aircraft destroyed, downed or damaged.

In the summer of 1966, the *leathernecks* were hastily deployed into the thick jungle north of Quang Tri province, near the 17th parallel.

On August 1, 1966 *Washington News* disclosed that the strength of each battalion of the Third Marine Division dropped from 1,100 to 600 men and that of each company from 200 to 125. For its part, *Christian Science Monitor* wrote on September 21, 1966 that the guerillas had whittled down half of the 59,000 American marines operating in the First Tactical Area.

Meanwhile, the First Marine Battalion was badly mauled in the region of Da Nang and Chu Lai. On August 7, 1967, the *International Herald Tribune* gave this gloomy picture of that sector: 16,000 marine casualties since the beginning of the year, great shortage of manpower in all battalions, some of which deprived of up to 50 per cent of their men, etc.

The diminution of strength of the "Marines" was so serious that despite their legendary truculence, these swashbucklers had to swallow their pride and call the infantry to their rescue and let their "game-preserve" trespassed by the "Oregon Task Force" in 1967 and the following year, by the "Paras" of the 101st Division and the "First Cav.". One still remembers the famous Khe Sanh siege and its evacuation — disatrous for the "Marines" —, the murderous battles they had to fight during the 1968 Tet offensives in Hue and Da Nang.

Now, driven into the defensive, the "Marines" do not even find safety in Da Nang and have to permanently share their area with two other American divisions, the 101st and the *Americal*.

THE "BIG RED ONE", SENIOR OF U.S. INFANTRY DIVISIONS, HAS ITS BACK BROKEN IN REGIONS NORTH AND NORTHWEST OF SAIGON

THE U.S. First Infantry Division, nicknamed the *Big Red One* was the second biggest American unit to set foot in South Viet Nam in 1965. Its history is the longest of all American divisions and dates back to June 1917; it was the first division to fight overseas, the first to land in Africa and the first to break through the Siegfried line in World War II, etc.

More favoured than the "Marines", it operated on a vantage ground with all the trump cards of U.S. infantry, having the greatest number of motorized and armoured vehicles and artillery than any other similar units. However...

On November 1965, it suffered a real disaster at Bau Bang, 54 Km north of Saigon, losing four battalions (two armoured). Up to the summer of 1966, it sustained a series of bitter setbacks.

Beaten hollow, the *Big Red One* lost part of its vainglory; *AP* reported at that time that each of the men of that division had got into the habit of asking themselves whether he would become in the evening a frozen corpse! A letter from the GI Palassios, carried by the *Nicaragua* on April 6, 1966, revealed that after one month, over half of his mates had been killed. In fact the losses of the *Big Red One* at that time were very serious: from November 1965 to August 1966, 19 of its battalions were wiped out including 11 armoured units.

In the second dry-season strategic counter-offensive (1966-1967), Westmoreland still gave that exhausted unit the role of spearhead in the famous Operation *Junction City* under the command of General Seaman, ex-commander of the First Infantry Division. The failure of the campaign which led to the dismissal of Seaman put an end to the preponderant role played on the Saigon front up to that time by the *Big Red One* whose losses made up the major part of the cost of the operation: 14,000 GIs and puppet troops put out of action, 1,000 military vehicles (800 tanks and armoured cars) and 90 cannons destroyed, 167 planes and choppers downed.

The morale of enemy troops was most gravely affected, chiefly since the beginning of the general offensives and uprisings. In February 1968, 600 GIs of that division refused battle and demanded their repatriation. On May 9, at Lai Khe, HQ of the division, a company disobeyed orders to go and rescue the puppet troops beleaguered nearby; the following day 49 GIs coming to the end of their terms in Viet Nam demonstrated at Lai Khe against the refusal by the American authorities to repatriate them; disheartened by the rough treatment of their superiors, seven of them attempted suicide. Then on September 26, 1968, a whole battalion opposed the U.S. war in South Viet Nam.

Now, its position is no better and its role is still obscure in that sector yet of vital importance for the enemy.

THE "FIRST CAV.", A DEPRESSING EXPERIENCE

A division with some 450 choppers and hundreds of vehicles which give it a mobility never achieved before in any terrain, what an ideal instrument devised by Mc Namara to impose "Pax Americana" on the world, chiefly on the "underdeveloped" countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America!

However, since the first months of its baptism of fire in South Viet Nam, after its heavy setbacks at Thuan Ninh and La Tinh on September 18 and October 10, 1965, *AFP* wryly remarked as early as October 14, 1965 that that division, built along the concept of an absolute air mobility, is less mobile than the bare-footed guerillas in the jungle of Viet Nam.

In the famous battles at Pley Me and Ia Drang at the end of 1965, it is recalled, the First Cav. was so tired out that the U.S. command had to send puppet troops to its rescue. It is the firemen who now cry out for help!

The fact that up to March 1967, that division had to change its commander-in-chief twice speaks volumes for its sorry plight.

At the beginning of 1968 the "First Cav." was hastily sent to the rescue of the "Marines" indubitably trounced in the Hue-Quang Tri sector. On April 1, for the first time in its history, the whole division, with three brigades, conducted a military operation to relieve Khe Sanh, an operation which, as one knows, was given up before attaining its aim. On April 19, arrayed in the A So region, southwest of Hue, it lost on the first day 34 choppers and one month later, hardly had it taken breath at its Dong Lam base, when it experienced one of the heaviest poundings made at that time by PLAF artillery which destroyed 150 helicopters within an hour.

Sent anew to the Saigon front in November last year, it suffered the most serious losses in the Tay Ninh and Hon Quan sector where, from May 5 to 14, 1969, 3,000 of its men, or 20 per cent of its buildup were put out of action and nearly one hundred of its choppers (about 20 per cent of its total number) blasted out of the sky or to pieces.

Initially built for great mobility missions, that division is now operating in a static defence disposition stretching on 100 kilometres long and sustaining very heavy losses as revealed by *AP* on December 1, 1968. Is there a more eloquent proof of its basic bankruptcy?

GIs welcoming Tet cease-fire order by NFL

"TROPIC LIGHTNING" SCORCHED IN THE TROPICS

UPI correspondent bitterly remarked on November 1966 that the GIs of the 25 th Infantry Division who had garrisoned in 13 countries had never fought so hard and murderous a war as in Viet Nam after one year in action.

That division nicknamed *Tropic Lightning* was composed of servicemen coming from the Pacific islands, inured to the tropical climate and especially trained for the fighting in these regions.

It is mustered in the sector northwest of Saigon, known for decades for its people's revolutionary tradition, chiefly in the first resistance war (1945-1954). Cu Chi district, some thirty kilometres from Saigon, where is located the HQ of the division, was in 1967 one of the most glorious guerilla theatres in South Viet Nam.

However, the gloomiest period of the *Tropic Lightning* undoubtedly began in early 1968. In 33 days, from January 31 to March 3, it had 4,500 men, 100 motorized vehicles and 150 aircraft put out of action, and its HQ at Dong Da was stormed once every three days.

In August 1968, after the defeats inflicted by the PLAF from the 17th to the 31st, its First Brigade garrisoned in Tay Ninh region was virtually written off the strength.

Beginning this year, a series of blows were delivered to it in the post-Tet offensives, chiefly at Tra Cao and Ben Tranh, by the patriots who, within ten days, disabled four of its battalions. On February 26, another devastating onset mounted by the PLAF on its HQ at Dong Du resulted in 1,300 GI casualties and 129 aircraft, 180 motorized vehicles and 5,000 tons of materials destroyed.

The heavy losses sustained by that division are not without any connection with the proposal made by the American press to put the *Tropic Lightning* high on the list of home-coming units. Western press correspondents have many a time pointed out that servicemen in that division, nearing the end of their stay in Viet Nam, have taken to sticking on their helmets a slip of paper saying: "My stay is drawing to a close, don't fire at me". In the period between August 27 and September 2, 1968, in the ambushes laid in the Tay Ninh region, PLAF men saw on nine occasions GIs abandon their tanks and armoured cars or self-propelled cannons and flee at the first salvoes of the attackers.

It is in that division that 3,000 GIs staged on December 27, 1968 a big demonstration for their repatriation.

Obviously the *Tropic Lightning* cannot feel at home in our country.

(To be continued)

IT is clear that since the shift to the new period, we have achieved unprecedentedly great and comprehensive successes in the military, political and diplomatic fields, in both the South and the North, at home and abroad. We have forced the adversary to scale down his escalation step by step and driven him into a state of passivity and a blind alley. We are winning, we are developing our victories and we are giving a strong boost to our offensive posture to advance towards total victory.

Such gains are a logical outcome of the correct and creative application of the political and military line of the Viet Nam revolution, the accurate appraisal of the enemy's situation and ours throughout a long period of the revolution as well as in every given situation, the ever firmer grasping of the law of development of a revolutionary war, the continual promotion of the factors of victory of the war, and the close combination of the spirit of thorough-going revolution of the most advanced thinking with the tradition of of staunchness and dauntlessness of our people.

They can also be ascribed to the invincible strength of the bloc of great national union under the banner of great justice, the national democratic banner. This banner finds full expression in the Political Programme of the NFL and that of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces and serves as the rallying symbol of all strata of our people in the struggle against U.S. imperialism, for national salvation.

It is exactly under this same banner of great justice that the national democratic banner of the patriotic forces in the cities and rural areas still under enemy control is working for the overthrow of the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique and the formation of a peace cabinet. This bloc of great national union is exactly the cause of past successes and will lead our fight to total victory.

Our people's accomplishments are also due to the indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese nation tempered throughout several thousand years of the history of construction coupled with resistance to foreign invasion, a nation which has given birth to the Trung and Trieu sisters and to Tran Hung Dao, Le Loi, Nguyen Trai, Quang Trung, Tran Phu and Nguyen Thi Minh Khai. This tradition of unsubmissiveness has been further enhanced in modern history, during the August Revolution and the Resistance War against outside aggression until this date, and has produced many national heroes and heroines who fear no danger, no hardship and no sacrifice and who are resolved to win at all cost.

Those achievements have created a steady basis for our armed forces and people to march forward to final victory, for the realisation of the goals of the revolutionary struggle for the liberation of South Viet Nam, namely, independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and ultimate peaceful reunification of the country.

It is clear that we are accomplishing an unusually great thing. With the reverses inflicted on the U.S. imperialists having at their disposal more than one million U.S., puppet and satellite troops, we are keeping in check the biggest and most ferocious war of aggression in our nation's history. At the same time, with our successful resistance to the leading and mightiest power of the imperialist camp, we have brought to light the basic weaknesses of U.S. imperialism and exploded the myths of "U.S. wealth and might" and "power of the U.S. armed forces". We fully endorse the conclusion of Lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho's Political Report to the Congress.

In our time, a people with a medium-size population and territory, with a correct line, closely united and resolved to fight to a finish, are fully capable of driving back step by step, defeating part by part and ultimately and completely defeating, any aggression by the imperialists. In translating this axiom into reality, our people make a positive contribution to the national liberation movement of all nations, and to the safeguarding of peace in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world. From our achievements we also derive great pride. Our nation and the whole of mankind have entrusted our present generation with this historical and glorious mission: to get the better of the U.S. imperialist aggressor, the chieftain of the imperialists and the international gendarme. Our armed forces and people are resolved to be equal to this responsibility and to discharge it to the full (...)

GREAT NATIONAL UNION, SOUTH VIET NAM REVOLUTION'S MAJOR POLICY AND SOURCE OF INVINCIBLE STRENGTH

(Excerpts from the statement by the representative of the Viet Nam People's Revolutionary Party at the South Viet Nam Congress of People's Representatives)

Our Party has always maintained that the revolution is the work of the entire people and that the strength of great national union within a solid and broad national united front is one of the factors of victory of the fight for national liberation at present and the building of the country in the future. The policy of great national union is, therefore, a major policy of our Party. It is the policy of sincere solidarity and long-term co-operation. It is like a red thread running through all other policies of our Party. Now as in the past and in the future, we advocate the constant broadening of the united front, the front of great union embracing all social strata and classes, political parties, religious communities, nationalities, patriotic and progressive individuals and forces, irrespective of their political leanings, for the joint struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys to wrest back the sacred national rights and build the country.

We are fully confident that the fine alliance and concord between the South Viet Nam NFL and the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces will provide a solid and steady basis for the constant strengthening and broadening of the national united front against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. We are also fully confident that, relying on the bloc of great national union, our people's revolutionary power will unite and mobilise our entire armed forces and people to march forward courageously, defeat the U.S. imperialists' war of aggression, overthrow their puppet administration, proceed to the formation of a broad national, democratic coalition administration, build an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam and advance towards peaceful national reunification.

(Continued page 7)

The Present Vientiane Administration, a Tool of the U.S. "*Special War*" in Laos

(Excerpts from the June 23, 1969 Memorandum of Laotian Patriotic Front Central Committee)

Editor's Note: *On the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the formation of the Laotian Tripartite National Union Government (June 23, 1962) and the 7th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Agreement on Laos (July 23, 1962), the Central Committee of the Laotian Patriotic Front has issued a memorandum entitled* "Sabotage of the Laotian Tripartite National Union Government by U.S.-Imperialism and Henchmen and Creation of the Present Vientiane Administration Headed by Prince Souvanna Phouma — an Outgrowth of U.S. Neo-Colonialism in Laos."

The memorandum consists of three parts:

Part I *outlines the process of the undermining of the Laotian Tripartite National Union Government by the U.S. and its stooges, which is also that of the formation of the present Vientiane Administration.*

Part II *deals with the present Vientiane Administration, a tool of the U.S. "special war" in Laos.*

Part III *describes the inglorious role played by Prince Souvanna Phouma at the service of U.S. interests.*

We print herebelow some excerpts of Part II of the Memorandum.

AFTER the April 1964 putsch, the Vientiane Administration was shaping up in a period when the U.S. policy in Asia had come to a turning point marked by the conference of the high ranking U.S. diplomatic and military experts in Honolulu in June that year to chart an anti-communist policy in South-East Asia, especially in Laos and South Viet Nam (*AFP*, May 28 and June 1, 1964).

As its promoter, the U.S. had kept its not "*fairly tight*" (as *UPI* remarked on March 31, 1967), but very tight control over the Vientiane Administration as a means to further its policy in Laos under the plans adopted at the Honolulu Conference.

1. A BACK-UP AND INSTRUMENT FOR THE U.S. TO STEP UP ITS ENCROACHMENTS ON THE AREAS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE LAOTIAN PATRIOTIC FORCES AND CARRY OUT ITS "PACIFICATION" PLAN

ACCORDING to still incomplete statistics, in the past five years, the Vientiane Administration has received an average of more than 100 million dollars of U.S. aid per year (up to 140 million for some years). Of this amount, military aid accounts for more than 60 million dollars and is used to defray the whole military budget of the Vientiane administration. That is the highest level of U.S. aid per head of population compared with any other recipient country. Also in these five years up to early 1968, the Vientiane Administration let the US increase the number of its specialists in Laos to 12,000, including thousands of military personnel from U.S. satellites such as Thailand, South Viet Nam, the Philippines and Taiwan. Thus, for a population of about 1,400,000 in the area controlled by the Vientiane Administration, there are 8 Americans for every thousand Laotians. This is a very significant ratio.

This large contingent of advisers is nothing other than a camouflaged war machine, a disguised ruling apparatus of US neo colonialism capping the Vientiane Administration. Submitting to the dictate of the dollars and that veiled ruling machine, the Vientiane Administration has been zealously stepping up the execution of its military plans to attack and nibble at the liberated areas, and conducted "pacification" raids in the area under its control.

With a view to wiping out the Laotian patriotic forces, the Vientiane Administration has thrown its regular army and "special force" units directly commanded by the US and Thai advisers into repeated assaults against the areas under the control of the Laotian Patriotic Front and the Laotian Patriotic Neutralist Forces.

They launched many big operations involving from 2 or 3 mobile regiments to 20 mobile battalions with artillery, armour and air support. In the last few years, though sustaining repeated reverses in the dry seasons, each heavier than the other, before they concentrated on carrying out dry-season military campaigns against the areas under the control of the L.P.F. and L.P.N.F. in many directions and many theatres, thus extending every day the scale of the "special war" and taking it to an ever higher degree of fierceness. At the end of the recent dry season, after serious setbacks they hurled a dozen battalions of regular army and the "special forces" into new adventures deep in the liberated zone of Xieng Khoang province including the provincial capital. In co-ordination with the infantry, planes of the U.S. and puppets razed to the ground Xieng Khoang town and many district towns like Khang Khay, Phonsavan, etc. Along with encroaching operations, the Vientiane administration carried out hundreds of "sweeps" big and small again and again on the areas still under their control. The raiders indulged in looting and burning, herded the population into concentration camps and massacred patriots.

As an important part of its "pacification" plan, the Vientiane Administration has for some years now been endeavouring to build the so called "refugees' zone" under a major plan of the U.S. The project was directly financed by the U.S. This is a form of coercion and control of the population mainly applied in the highlands and the areas inhabited by national minorities. Under the signboard of "refugees," the Vientiane Administration on the one hand penned up at times hundreds and even thousands of families from several villages after using aircraft to devastate their villages. On the other hand, the raiders arrested the people during "sweeps" and even used helicopters to kidnap civilians and take them to concentration camps a long distance from their villages. These camps were later built into "refugees' zones".

At present, dozens of thousands of Laotians impounded in the "refugees' zones" are leading a most miserable life. Unable to bear the harsh control, the detainees in many "refugees' zones" have risen up to demand a better life and protest against forcible conscription into the puppet army or the bandit and commando forces. Many have broken away from the concentration camps and returned to their home villages.

Beside the "refugees" zones", the puppet administration has also set up "prosperity zones" under the so-called "rural development program". The U.S. aid mission has financed and supplied material means to the Vientiane Administration to carry out this scheme, directly trained Laotian cadres for "rural consolidation" and sent U.S. and other foreign specialists of the "International Voluntary Service for Rural Development" down to the villages to direct the execution of the plan in the first year. The "prosperity zone" is in effect a form of concentrating the population without destroying their villages, a combination of demagogic moves by economic and political means with psychological warfare and violence with a view to bringing the people under government control and turning these zones into suppliers of manpower and material resources for the U.S. "special war". Military actions against the areas under the control of the Laotian patriotic forces, "pacification" of the areas under the control of the Vientiane Administration through "sweeps", tight control of the population in the "refugees' zones" and "prosperity zones" are different aspects of the U.S. "special war" in Laos. The more it is dependent on the U.S., the harder the Vientiane Administration strives to help the U.S. intensify and step up this criminal war and the more suffering and destruction it inflicts on the Laotian masses.

2. A BACK-UP FOR BOMBING RAIDS ON THE LIBERATED AREAS BY U.S. AIRCRAFT

IT is common knowledge that since May 1964, the U.S. has begun air strikes against Xieng Khoang, the Plain of Jars, then quickly expanded their air raids to all the liberated areas from Upper to Lower Laos. Over the past five years, Washington contended, U.S. jets only made "armed reconnaissance flights" in Laos and only fired back in self-defence.

As for the Vientiane Administration and Prince Souvanna Phouma, they also vaguely hinted that U.S. planes only flew reconnaissance missions and sometimes bombed the Laotian border areas, while the bombardments of the areas under the LPF control had been carried out by the Vientiane air force. Not until recently during interviews with *UPI* and other foreign correspondents on February 12 and June 13, 1969, did Phouma openly admit the bombing of the Laotian liberated areas by U.S. aircraft.

U.S. aerial bombardments of the Laotian liberated areas are a special form of the U.S. "special war" in Laos. That is a step further in the direct participation of the U.S. in that war to cope with the ever gloomier military and political posture of its henchmen in Laos. The U.S. imperialists have counted on their air superiority to try to break the Laotian people's fighting will and provide support for their henchmen's operations against the liberated areas. Though a big power party to the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, the U.S. has thus been using its air force against a country whose sovereignty and independence had been recognized by that international instrument and which is tens of thousands of miles away from the U.S. and not at war with it. That is a breach of international law and a brazen challenge to public opinion in all countries, including the U.S.

As the U.S. was in need of a back-up for its brazen act of aggression, it raised a lot of noise about the so called "requirement" and agreement of the Laotian government and Prime Minister Phouma", and the Vientiane Administration immediately echoed the U.S., declaring that the U.S. was acting at its request and with its consent.

Since November 1968, the U.S. has been multiplying its air attacks against the Laotian liberated areas. Aircraft of the U.S. and the Vientiane puppet administration have flown the largest and fiercest bombings ever experienced here. Tactical planes and B.52 strategic bombers have increased their missions and sorties by three or four times compared with the previous period, using many times more of bombs and shells.

3. A SMOKESCREEN FOR THE U.S. INTERVENTIONIST AND AGGRESSIVE ACTS

IN signing the 1962 Geneva Agreement, the U.S. pursued a double-faced policy and it retraced its signature before the ink had dried on it. However, while breaking its solemn commitments in Geneva, the U.S. cannot completely ignore public opinion. Therefore, its has deliberately wrested the Accord to create a "legal basis" — even though a spurious — for its neo-colonialist acts of intervention and aggression in an attempt to justify itself and deceive public opinion. Its most habitual plea has been that it has acted at the request and with the agreement of the Laotian government and Prime Minister Phouma, that this is consistent with the Geneva Agreement and is aimed at supporting the government of Prime Minister Phouma and defending Laos' neutrality. The Vientiane Administration and Phouma have repeated this claim of the U.S. at every opportunity and from every forum, at home or abroad, to argue for the U.S. and plead for themselves. They have ceaselessly slandered the LPF and the DRVN, clamouring about the so-called "infiltration of North Viet Nam troops" with a view to misleading public opinion and covering up the U.S. presence in Laos.

Since the U.S. intervention and aggression became more and more evident and its presence in Laos more and more undeniable, such allegations have met with ever greater rebuff. That is why, to make black white, they have given a "supplementary" justification that the U.S. presence in Laos is an outgrowth of the aggressive act of the other side. The Vientiane Administration and Phouma have since over and again repeated and "supplemented" this contention.

It is clear that Phouma is resorting to fabrications and lies to swear the LPF and the DRVN and blur truth and falsehood. But it is not secret that the U.S. had created the Katay — Sasorith puppet administration as far back as 1954 and had used it as a tool to attack the regroupment provinces of the Pathet Lao Forces. It is also the U.S. which had used the power of the Phoui Sananikone puppet administration and incited it to scrap the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Laos. It is the U.S. which has set up in Laos the MAAG (military Assistance Advisory Group) to direct and expand the "Special war" to such an extent that it brought U.S marines into Thailand in 1961-1962 in preparation for a jump into Laos; and it is the U.S which has stepped up the war with the direct participation of the U.S air force.

Of late, the Vientiane Administration has tried with even greater zeal to plead for the stepped-up U.S intervention and aggression in Laos. In March this year, when Washington reported that U.S marines in South Viet Nam had crossed the border to operate in Laos, then pretended to apologize to Vientiane in order to prepare public opinion for new U.S military adventures, the Vientiane Administration hastened to express its "regret" over the "incident". The truth is that it has secretly joined hands with the U.S. In April this year, pretexting the tie-up in communication it asked the reactionary ruling circles in Bangkok to help it in the transportation from Upper to Lower Laos via Thailand of modern weapons to the Laotian army, including the Saigon puppet army.

But the U.S can never put a legal cloak on its unjust and illegal acts nor conceal its aggressive nature since it is using a stooge administration as a screen and resorting to falsehoods to further its aims. As for the present Vientiane Administration, the more it tries to justify the U.S aggressors and the more it helps them escalate their "special war" to massacre Laotians with bombs and bullets, the more its anti-national and anti-popular features are exposed. The Laotian people regard the Vientiane Administration as completely illegal, as an administration which has betrayed the nation and people and a mere instrument in the hands of the U.S aggressors.

VIET NAM FATHERLAND FRONT PRESIDENT GREETS PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG'S 60th BIRTHDAY

Ton Duc Thang, President of the Presidium of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front Central Committee, sent on July 12 his warmest greetings to Prince Souphanouvong, Chairman of the Laotian Patriotic Front Central Committee, on the occasion of the latter's 60th birthday.

The message said:

"The Vietnamese people hold in boundless esteem and respect Your Highness, a staunch revolutionary activist embodying the great unity of the Laotian people who are devoting all their might and main to the liberation of Laos.

"They are greatly elated at every great victory recorded by the Laotian Patriotic Front and the brother Laotian people. The Vietnamese people are firmly convinced that the heroic Laotian people, under the clearsighted leadership of the Laotian Patriotic Front headed by Your Highness, will record still greater achievements in their great resistance to the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their henchmen to build a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos. The Vietnamese people sincerely thank the Laotian people for their support of the Vietnamese revolution, and pledge to stand shoulder to shoulder with the fraternal Laotian people in the struggle against the common enemy until final victory.

"I once again sincerely wish Your Highness the best of health, longevity and many new successes in your noble task."

Justice is on Dr. Benjamin Spock's side

ON July 11, the U.S. Court of Appeal cancelled last year verdict of 2 year's imprisonment and 5,000 dollars' fine by the Boston Federal Tribunal against well known baby Doctor Benjamin Spock.

Doctor Benjamin Spock is no stranger to the Vietnamese. He is not only among the best pediatricians in the United States, but also a valiant peace militant, author of the well-known book "Doctor Spock and Viet Nam Problem", and a firm leader of the movement of U.S. progressives against the aggressive war in Viet Nam and for the withdrawal of the U.S. Expeditionary Corps from South Viet Nam. The movement also backs American anti-draft youth.

The U.S. government prosecuted Doctor Spock and four other American intellectuals simply because they had called on the American youths to "oppose the unjust power" of the Johnson administration. But Doctor Spock had turned the Boston Federal Tribunal into a rostrum to denounce the U.S. aggressive war in Viet Nam. The trial of Doctor Benjamin Spock and his friends has triggered off a strong wave of protest among U.S. and world progressives. It was under the strong pressure of public opinion that the U.S. Court of Appeal also had to cancel the sentence of the Boston Federal Tribunal. The U.S. court of Appeal also had to drop the charge against student Michael Ferber and to reconsider the verdicts against writer Michell Goodman and Father William Coffin who were arraigned together with Doctor Benjamin Spock.

Truth and justice definitely are on the side of Doctor Spock and his friends, genuine representatives of American intellectuals and progressives and friends of the Vietnamese people.

NGHE AN...

(Continued from page 3)

Nam, a heavy task has been imposed on the people of Vinh City and Nghe An province. It consisted in disposing of delayed-action or dud bombs. This dangerous and tedious job is still underway at present and it has not been getting on without posing grave problems. The population should be prepared for this job, both technically and psychologically, for the presence of many time-bombs which may explode any time and anywhere risked, apart from the loss of lives and materiel, creating panic among the people. For the bombs dropped on communication lines, one would wait until the bomb exploded or made to explode. But the diabolical enemy had released a large number of heavy delayed-action bombs on the dykes just at a moment when the rivers were in spate. The local officials and peasants arrived at this admirable conclusion: "The Americans rain bombs everywhere, but we make them explode wherever we want to". And so, virtually all the bombs dumped on the dykes since April 1968 had been removed elsewhere. That required a very great courage and the job was mainly tackled by the engineer corps. Often enough, the bombs were dropped at night. Then what needed to be done was to spot their place of fall and move them far from the dykes. Such bombs were also to be found in surrounding riccfields and it was the young volunteers that, challenging death, had harvested and brought in the paddy.

In Vinh, there are many bereaved families. Many are parents who have lost their children, children their parents, husbands their wives and brothers their sisters.

At the hotel where I stayed, I met comrade Nguyen Van Quang, a man of 35 with sedate manners and whose amiable smile had not been the least marked by the awful tragedy which came to him on April 6, 1967. In a calm voice, he told me that at about noon that day, after meal his 4 children were playing in the court of their house when the Yankee pirates suddenly launched a co-ordinate bombing raid. His 8-year-old daughter who was carrying one of her little twin brothers of tender years, was killed instantly together with the baby. The other twin and the mother were tossed into a ditch by the bomb blast. Her last born was the only spare. As for the mother, badly injured, she was sent to the hospital and left it 4 months later, half recovered. Then on April 28, 1968 at about 1 p.m., while with her youngest daughter she was selling hot tea in a small hut made by her husband, two U.S. planes flew in and fired a salvo of 7 rockets on the area. Although the child had enough time to take to shelter, the woman and her daughter were killed on the spot. Calmly, Nguyen Van Quang told me that in spite of the terrible pain caused by the loss of all his dear ones, he was resolved to translate this pain into hatred against the enemy, so as to serve the common cause better.

My breath taken away by emotion, I could say nothing to him, and clasped his hand for a long while before taking leave of him.

ANTOINE DAUPHIN

GREAT NATIONAL UNION...

(continued from page 5)

One of the classical tricks of the imperialists and their lackeys has been to drive a wedge with every possible means into a nation to weaken the patriotic forces which are resisting them. More particularly, they cover up with the anti-communist signboard their aggressive nature and their henchmen's dictatorial, fascist and traitorous colours. In South Viet Nam, the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, from Diem and Nhu to Thieu, Ky and Huong, have all along used this fable, to crack down, in an extremely barbarous manner, on all patriots, on all those who have deeply at heart the destiny of the Fatherland and want the nation to be independent and free. They believe that with such a deception they will be able to conceal their aggressive and traitorous essence and obscure the popular character of our people's war of resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation under the glorious banner of the South Viet Nam NFL of which our Viet Nam People's Revolutionary Party is a member.

However, up to now their divisive manoeuvres have failed lamentably: with our identity of views in the struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation we have been winning even greater successes.

Our task of liberating South Viet Nam, defending the North and progressing toward peaceful reunification of the country will certainly come to fruition.

Military Operations

IN SAIGON AND SAIGON SECTOR:

— Raid on Camp Paloma of U.S. naval officers in Saigon's 5th precinct: 157 enemy soldier casualties.

— 750 adverse troops and 65 military vehicles put out of action in 4 provinces North, Northwest and Southwest of the city.

— 800 enemy troops wiped out in the first 4 days of July by PLAF in 3 Mekong Delta provinces.

IN HUE AND IN THUA THIEN PROVINCE:

— Surprise attacks on Hue Radio, Dong Da military training camp and a U.S. 101st Airborne unit in A Bia valley: 450 adverse casualties.

IN BINH THUAN PROVINCE:

— A US unit and 2 companies of the puppet Special Forces lost 300 men in action.

IN the first days of July, fierce fighting continued in the provinces of the Saigon sector.

Particularly on the night of July 10, 1969 the self-defence corps in the city raided Camp Paloma of U.S. Navy officers in Nguyen Van Thoai Street, 5th precinct. The bomb attack damaged the facade of the 5-storey building and put 157 Americans out of action.

On July 6 and 7, Liberation gunners pounded the HQ of the puppet army's 25th division (25km west of Saigon), the Duc Hoa military sector, the Hau Nghia military sub-sector (35 km west-northwest of Saigon), an artillery site and a U.S. special forces camp in Duc Hue (52km west-northwest of Saigon). Liberation infantrymen struck at the puppet 49th civil guard company (in Hau Nghia). According to preliminary reports, 130 American and puppet soldiers were killed or wounded in these battles. The PLAF brought down 2 choppers and sank a patrol boat on Vam Co Dong river.

In **Tay Ninh** province, the PLAF wiped out 160 GI's and shot down 3 helicopters in 2 engagements on July 3 and July 4 with 2 U.S. detachments, one near Ba Chiem (107 km northeast of Saigon) and the other near Loc Ninh (101 km northeast of Saigon).

On July 8 and 9, in 2 ambushes against an armoured column of the 2nd battalion, U.S. 11th Armoured Cavalry Regiment, near Loc Ninh, Binh Long province (118km north of Saigon) and on 2 companies of U.S. M.113's on Highway No 13 (83km North of Saigon), the PLAF destroyed 36 tanks and armoured cars, cut down 3 choppers and put many GI's out of action.

In **My Tho** province (60 Km southwest of Saigon), between June 30 and July 2, the PLAF fought 4 battles, liquidated 95 agents of 4 "pacification" teams notorious for their cruelty. At dawn on July 9, after a violent artillery barrage, they rushed 19 enemy positions in the province (including 4 military sectors), a U.S. cantonment on Highway N° 4 and a U.S. vehicle compound near the provincial capital. Enemy casualties ran to 280. The Liberation fighters blasted 29 military vehicles (including 10 bulldozers of the U.S. engineering corps), burnt 34 tents and 4 fuel tanks, and shot down 1 helicopter.

All told, during these actions, the PLAF operating in the provinces of the Saigon sector and the city's self-defence corps disabled 750 American and puppet troops, wrecked 65 military vehicles and brought down 9 helicopters.

Heavy fighting also took place in the 3 Mekong-Delta provinces.

In **An Giang** province (170 km South-west of Saigon) the PLAF on July 9 intercepted a detachment of puppet civil guards at Tan Chau (15 km northwest of the provincial capital) taking a toll of 200 adverse troops. At dawn on June 27, they brought many positions of the puppet army in Tan Chau district town under fire, exacting 200 enemy casualties. On the night of June 27 and on July 6, the PLAF in **Rach Gia** province (185 km west-southwest of Saigon) zeroed in on many enemy positions in the provincial capital and 4 district towns: the residence of the provincial chief, administrative offices, the airfield (July 6) and military posts around the provincial capital, and wiped out many enemy troops. Beating off a raid by 4 battalions of Regiment 31, puppet Division 21, the PLAF and regional troops on June 27 knocked out 200 enemy soldiers.

In **Ben Tre** province, (70 km south-west of Saigon) the PLAF and regional troops on July 4 and 6 staged many combats in the province capital, Binh Dai, Mo Cay and Huong My districts, the Cai Mon military sector, and the CP of the 3nd and 4th battalions of the puppet army. They killed or wounded 150 mercenaries and 45 cruel "pacification" agents.

Thus, in the first days of July, the armed forces of these 3 Mekong delta provinces had to their credit 800 adverse casualties.

In **Phan Thiet** province (154 km North-east of Saigon), on July 7 the PLAF sprang a surprise attack on a U.S. unit and 2 companies of the puppet special forces (supported by a U.S. armoured company) in the Luong Son area (45 km northeast of the provincial capital). After 35 minutes of fighting, they killed or wounded 300 enemy men and destroyed 12 armoured cars. On July 2, guerillas of Ham Thuan district engaged a detachment of the U.S. engineering corps, wrecking 10 bulldozers and 1 jeep.

In **Hue** and in the province of **Thua Thien**, the PLAF on July 3 and July 6 attacked Hue radio station, a company of Battalion 2, Regiment 54 of the puppet army, the Dong Da military training camp, a fuel depot and the artillery site at Phu Bai. They wiped out 300 enemy soldiers and destroyed a large quantity of war means.

On June 30 and between July 10 and July 13, the PLAF operating west of Hue city mounted successive attacks on the enemy at A Luoi (44 km west of Hue) and Hills 906, 916 and 996, 12km south of A Luoi. 150 paratroops of the U.S. 101 Airborne Division were knocked out, including 2 platoons completely struck off the charge.

A Quang Tri PLAF unit.

Saigon Journalists Incensed by U.S.-Puppet Bullying

A group of journalists in Saigon took the decision to stage on July 13 last a hunger strike at the Press Centre as a protest against the brutalities and vexations inflicted by the U.S.-puppet police and authorities on newsmen in the fulfilment of their duty, Western agencies reported.

This protest campaign began after the "rough tactics" resorted to by the police in a ceremony organized at Tan Son Nhat on the occasion of the "repatriation" of the first contingent of GIs under the plan for the deceptive withdrawal of 25,000 men of the U.S. expeditionary force decided by Nixon to hoodwink public opinion. According to an *AFP* correspondent, on that day, cameramen-reporters were expelled by force of arms from the stand while others were punched in the face.

Before this wrath of the newsmen, the U.S.-puppets had to give in by promising to punish the bullies.

However, these promises seem clearly inadequate to placate public opinion. The Thieu-Ky-Huong fascist clique, propped up by Washington, continues to encroach upon the freedom of the press and as it is known, within a year, over 30 newspapers have been closed down and many pressmen prosecuted, jailed or even killed by wicked thugs.

In Brief

On July 4, 1969, in the A So valley, southwest of Hue, 50 GIs and 10 puppet troops were killed or wounded in a clash between U.S. and puppet soldiers. In fact, U.S. planes had strafed and bombed by mistake a company of puppet Regiment 3 raiding near A Luoi; soldiers of a unit of puppet Regiment 5 coming to the rescue of Regiment 3, incensed by the rash attack of the Yankees, opened fire on a unit of U.S. motorised Division 5 moving behind them.

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